

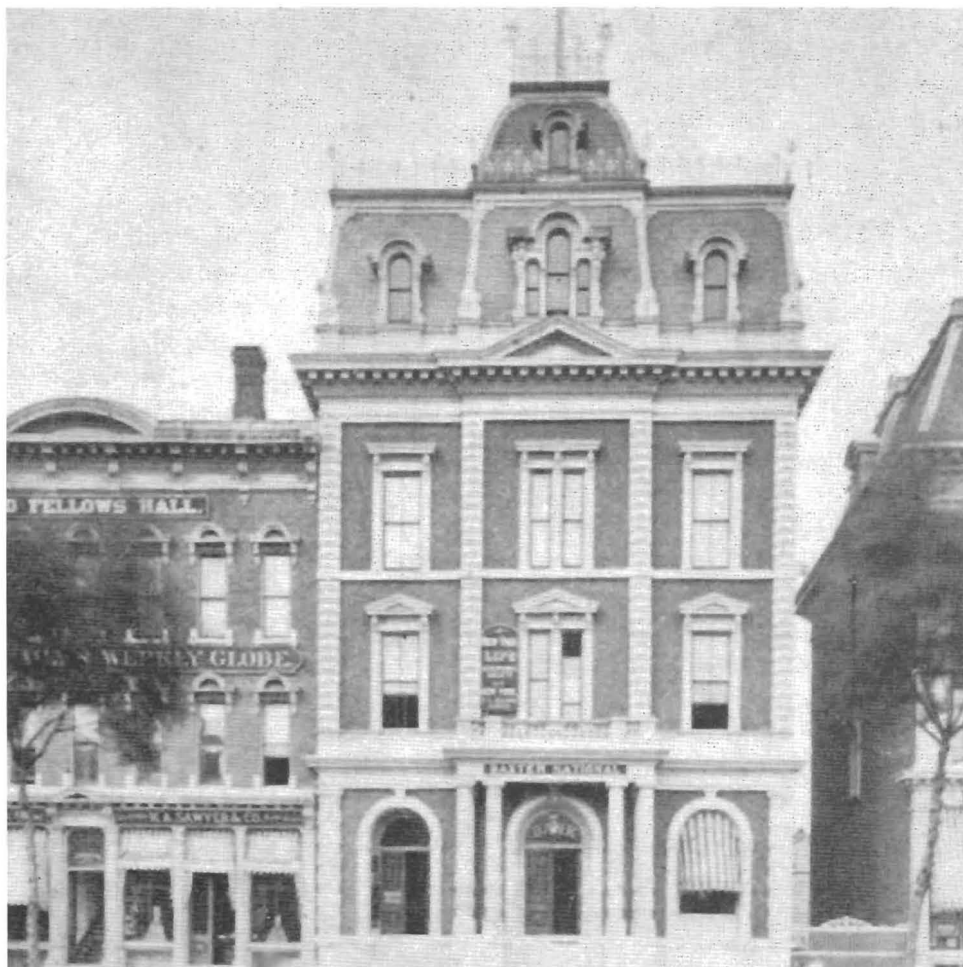
RUTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Quarterly

VOLUME 35 No. 4

2005

Then and Now: A Calendar



RUTLAND IN RETROSPECT

Built in 1871 by marble and railroad tycoon Horace Henry Baxter, the Baxter National Bank and Music Hall graced Merchants Row until the late 1920s when it was reconfigured into the Service Building which stands today.

About the Author

Jacob Sherman is the reference and technical services librarian at the Rutland Free Library. He is also Secretary of the Rutland Historical Society and Chairman of its Publications Committee. His most recent contribution to the society's publications was "Lost Buildings of Old Rutland Revisited: A Calendar," *Rutland Historical Society Quarterly* (Vol. 34 No. 4).

About the Calendar

Historical perspective is achieved by a comparison of **past and present**, with each pair of photos providing a visual **representation** of then and now. A textual entry for each **month in the** body of the *Quarterly* details the flow of history as it **has impacted** particular sites. Captions under the pictures **briefly** identify the items.

Front and Back Covers

The Baxter National Bank originally occupied the site of the Service Building at 128 Merchants Row. Built in 1871 by **marble** and railroad titan Horace Henry Baxter, the building **also** contained a music hall, perhaps to compete with the Ripley **Music Hall** which was located a block north on Merchants Row. The bank was rich in architectural detail and crowned with a **French Empire** roof. Baxter, who served as president of the New York Central Railroad prior to the reign of Commodore Vanderbilt, no doubt wanted his own bank as some years earlier he had been deprived of a controlling interest in the Rutland County Bank. After gracing downtown for nearly 60 years, the Baxter Bank was reconfigured by Rutland developer Carl Hinsman's plans for Vermont's first "skyscraper." The seven-story Service Building, designed in the Art Deco style by the Boston firm of Hutchins and French, was the tallest commercial building in the state when completed in 1930. Crowned with a golden pyramid and topped with a beacon to aid in airplane navigation, it also featured a state of the art Otis elevator. Today it houses 26 businesses.

The *Quarterly* is published by the Rutland Historical Society, 96 Center Street, Rutland VT 05701-4023. Co-editors: Jim Davidson and Jacob Sherman. Copies are \$2 each plus \$1 per order. Membership in the Society includes a subscription to the *Quarterly* and the *Newsletter*. Copyright © 2005 The Rutland Historical Society, Inc. ISSN 0748-2493.

Then and Now: A Calendar

By Jacob Sherman

January - Some time prior to 1794 the Union bridge was constructed across the Otter Creek in Sutherland Falls, as Proctor was then known, at or near the site of the present marble bridge. The great flood of 1811 carried this bridge over the falls and a replacement met the same fate in the flood of 1839. For the next two years Otter Creek could only be forded by boat or on long timbers. In 1841 Louis Wolcott built a covered bridge that was replaced in 1915 by the present marble bridge. The graceful, triple-arched span of the marble bridge was designed by New York architect Harry L. Walker and presented to the town as a gift by Emily J. Proctor in memory of her son Fletcher Proctor. The bridge, originally built of reinforced concrete faced with marble, underwent a complete rehabilitation in 2002 and was formally rededicated.

February - The year 1868 was a boom time in construction in downtown Rutland. Chief among the new buildings was the Bates House at the corner of Merchants Row and Center Street.. It was one of three impressive downtown hotels. In 1870 the building was gaily festooned for the town's Centennial. Six years later in 1876 it burned down. The following year the second Bates House took its place. This was an ornate structure in the French style featuring, balconies, window treatments, and a mansard roof. The apothecary's shop of Albert W. Higgins was located on the ground floor. With its colorful awnings, the hotel stood proudly in 1902 when President Theodore Roosevelt addressed a crowd of 8,000 in adjacent Depot Park. But on 18 February 1906, one of the worst fires in Rutland's history consumed the Bates House and with it six downtown commercial blocks. Within a few years the present five-story Mead Building was constructed on the site. The architect was Charles Paige who five years earlier had designed the new city hall and served as mayor from 1906 to 1907.

March - The original West Rutland schoolhouse was a sturdy brick structure built in 1885 by District No. 21. Soon after 1890 it was taken over by the village and made into a combination high and graded school. About 1918 the building had become

overcrowded and it was decided to move the high school students to the town hall. On the frigid morning of 15 February 1928, a fire of unknown origin, but possibly the result of overheated pipes or defective wiring, was discovered shortly before 8:00 A.M. and within hours had destroyed the structure. Sheets of ice covering the schoolyard and the street hampered the efforts of firefighters who included a contingent from Rutland under Chief Alfred Koltonski. Damage was estimated at \$50,000. The ruined edifice had contained 11 classrooms and was serving 325 students in eight grades. Within months the community undertook to build a larger school on the same site. Construction of this school was completed in 1929.

April - The southwestern corner of Center and South Main Streets, now occupied by the Koltonski Fire Station, was in former times the site of the Rutland Academy. It was here that in 1852 J.W. Hickox built a two-story brick schoolhouse. On 6 April 1855, under a legislative act of 1841, the school became the official high school of the village, representing the joining of four "districts," and became known as the Union School. In 1879 extensive additions were made. In addition to algebra, English composition and other subjects, the curriculum of 1885 featured astronomy, Greek, Latin and declamation. Later the Union School became known as the Meldon School and served Rutland as the high school until 1929. In 1928, a larger high school, in the Neo-Classical Revival style, was completed on Library Avenue. Meldon School continued as a graded school until 1957.

May - A 2 ½ story, brick, gable-front store was erected on West Street in 1817 for Dr. James Porter. The site is now occupied by a drug store on West Street across from Main Street Park. This period was a difficult one for Rutland as its leading citizens were sharply divided over issues raised by the Embargo Act of 1807 and the War of 1812. Adding to the stress, an epidemic swept through the village in 1813 carrying off dozens of individuals. Only Dr. Porter was left behind to cope as all the other local physicians had departed for northern Vermont to minister to soldiers fighting in the War of 1812. Just to the west of the Porter store was a fine residence occupied by Doctors Hannibal and Cyrus Porter, and to the west of that was a hotel, the American House, which was consumed by fire on 8 May 1857. It was believed to be the work of an arsonist.

June - A sturdy Federal-style brick home was built on West Street in Center Rutland in 1825 for Thomas Page, but it is best known as the homestead of Rutland's illustrious Ripley family whose members included a Civil War general, a colonel and author and poet Julia Caroline Ripley Dorr. The house came into the possession of William Young Ripley, Julia's father, sometime after 1837 when he sold his farm in Middlebury and came to Rutland to pursue a partnership in the marble business with William Barnes. Known as "The Center," the Ripley house was notable for its four chimneys and landscaped grounds that featured a greenhouse. In later years the house became the meeting place of the Center Rutland Athletic Club. Today it is again a private residence.

July - The building we know today as the Rutland Free Library began its life as a United States Court House and Post Office. Ammi B. Young, a New England architect who was serving as Supervising Architect of the United States Treasury, was the designer. It was under construction from 1856 to 1858. Some of Young's other buildings included the second Vermont State House, the Customs House in Boston, and the Timothy Follett Mansion in Burlington. Contractor for the Court House was J. J. R. Randall. U.S. Senator Solomon Foot of Rutland, who later became president pro tempore of the Senate and a close ally of President Lincoln, was instrumental in obtaining Federal funds for the project. There was intense debate as to whether the new structure should be located in the old town center along Main Street or in the new downtown on Merchants Row that had been developed by the coming of the railroad. Its location halfway between was a compromise. In 1929-30 a trade took place between the federal government and the city. The city took possession of the old building at the corner of Court and Center Streets in exchange for the site of Memorial Hall on West Street. By 1935 the old post office/courthouse had been converted to the Rutland Free Library which previously been housed in the basement of the old Memorial Hall. New library additions were built in 1966 and again in 1989.

August - The first Proctor school has played a key role in Proctor history for 170 years. Residents of the district were supposed to finance construction of the school, but when they failed to raise the requisite capital, William Humphrey provided \$250 to finish the job. The first teacher in the community was Jonathan G. Southmayd, a Middlebury College graduate. In 1866 the structure was no longer big enough and ceased to

function as a school. In 1891 it was converted to the town library and a new marble approach was added. In 1913 a new, much larger town library was constructed on the east side of the marble bridge, and following World War I the old town library, as it had become known, underwent yet another conversion, this time to the Memorial Municipal Building. It continues to serve as the town office nearly a century later

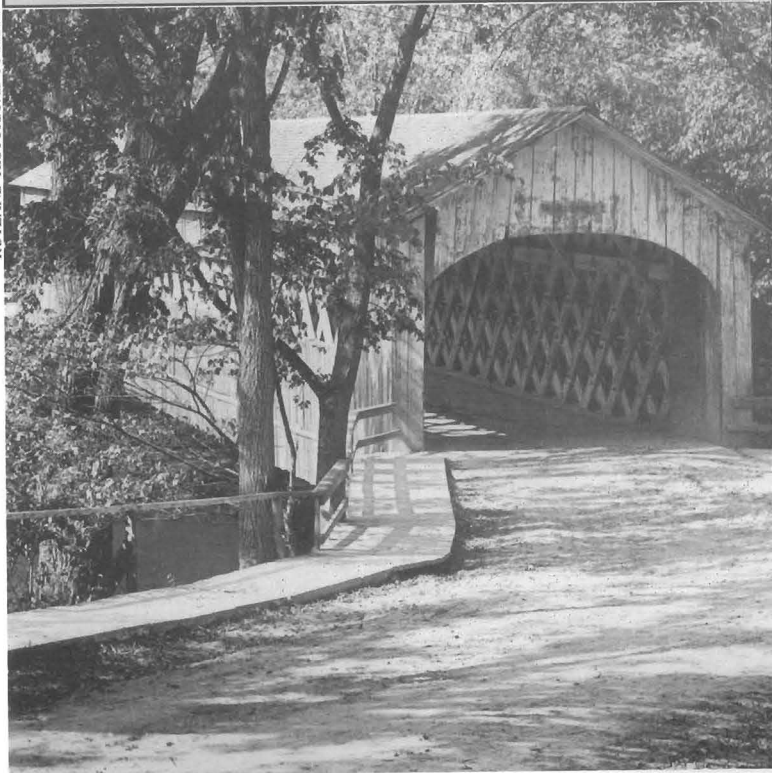
September - The city's first Baptist Church stood for nearly 45 years at the northeast corner of East Washington and South Main Streets. The square brick structure was built in 1827. The first settled pastor was the Reverend Hadley Proctor who served from 1827 to 1834. The Vermont Anti-Slavery Society held meetings in the church in 1835 and probably thereafter. The church was torn down in 1871-72 and replaced by a new church on the Center Street hill that was dedicated on 30 September 1873. Meanwhile, bricks from the razed church were used to construct two Second Empire homes on the site of the old church at the south end of property owned by former Governor John B. Page. The houses were built for the Governor's sons, Edward and William, who first occupied them in 1881. The homes were unusual in that they had mansard roofs atop a single story rather than two stories.

October - A church and a store once stood on the site presently occupied by the Rutland Town offices. Early settler William Gookin was reputed to have donated the land for the church, as well as the graveyard just to the west of it. The church was beautifully appointed with red carpeting in the aisles, red velvet on the pulpit, and a center chandelier. The Ripley family members were generous supporters and several of them sang in the choir. The last time services were held there was when Mary Ripley and her husband were lost at sea in 1873. In 1882 the church was purchased by the Vermont Marble Company and remodeled into a store that was operated by Mr. H. C. Harris. The building burned in late 1907. A new school was being erected on the site when in October 1908 fire again struck causing extensive damage to the nearly finished building. The school finally opened in January 1909. It was the largest of the Rutland Town schools, containing four classrooms. The school remained in operation until 1967 when the new Rutland Town School on Post Road was completed. At that time the old school became the town offices.

November - At the intersection of Main and Marble Streets in West Rutland, F. A. Morse began operating a store in 1867 dealing in drugs and fancy goods. The front of Morse's store was an important stop on the horse-drawn Rutland Street Railway line that had commenced operations in 1885. The storekeeper thoughtfully provided benches inside to accommodate those waiting for the streetcar. Later W. H. Humphreys acquired the store and ran it as Humphreys' Pharmacy through the First World War and the Depression. The next owner, Victor Sevigny, was 18 when he began clerking for Mr. Humphreys sometime in the 1930's. Known for the next several decades as Sevigny's the store became a center of town life, serving as pharmacy, grocery, and purveyor of hunting and fishing supplies.

December - The Bardwell House at the corner of Merchants Row and Washington Street was built in 1851 to serve the booming railroad trade. Otis Bardwell of Walpole, New Hampshire and his son-in-law Nathaniel Gould had purchased the land for \$1,000. Bardwell had risen from a stage-coach driver to first president of the Walpole Savings Bank. The hotel was 100 feet by 150 feet and contained accommodations for 200 guests. In 1852 it was described as being among the finest hotels in the country. John Cramton bought the property from Mrs. Bardwell in 1864, and in 1868 he added an elaborate 50-foot square addition capped with a mansard roof. Fire struck on at least two occasions, once in the late 1800s after which the hotel was rebuilt by the Lalor Brothers, and again on 1 December 1917, when firefighters battled the blaze in -25 degree temperatures. The inferno claimed the mansard roof and destroyed much of the interior craftsmanship. Rutland businessman and railroad magnate William Ginsburg purchased the hotel from the Brown family in 1948 and operated it until 1966, putting in a new kitchen and renovating some rooms. The last private owner was Walter Kenney who ran the establishment from 1976 to 1980, attempting to cater to ski traffic and foliage tours. In its century and a half of existence the Bardwell has hosted many famous individuals including John F. Kennedy. In 1859 the widow of fiery abolitionist John Brown stopped there overnight en route to North Elba, New York, with the body of her husband who had just been executed following his raid on Harper's Ferry. The State of Vermont purchased the Bardwell House in 1980. Today it offers housing to seniors and the disabled.

THEN



NOW



A covered bridge designed by Louis Wolcott was built across the Otter Creek in Sutherland Falls (Proctor) in 1841. It lasted until 1915 when it was replaced by the present Marble Bridge, a gift to the town from Emily J. Proctor.

JANUARY 2006

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 New Year's Day	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15 Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday	16 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

THEN



NOW



Built in 1877, the second Bates House, a hotel, occupied the northeast corner of Merchants Row and Center Street. Following a terrible fire in 1906 that destroyed several city blocks, it was replaced by the present Mead Building.

FEBRUARY 2006

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Lincoln's Birthday		Valentine's Day				
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	President's Day		Washington's Traditional Birthday			
26	27	28				

THEN



NOW



The original West Rutland schoolhouse was a sturdy brick structure built in 1885. At one time it served 325 students in its 11 classrooms. After it was destroyed by fire in February 1928, the present K-12 school was erected on the same site.

MARCH 2006

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 Ash Wednesday	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17 St. Patrick's Day	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

THEN



NOW



The Rutland Academy, built in 1852 and expanded in 1879, served as the city's high school during much of the 19th and early 20th centuries. The Koltonski Fire Station now occupies the site.

APRIL 2006

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

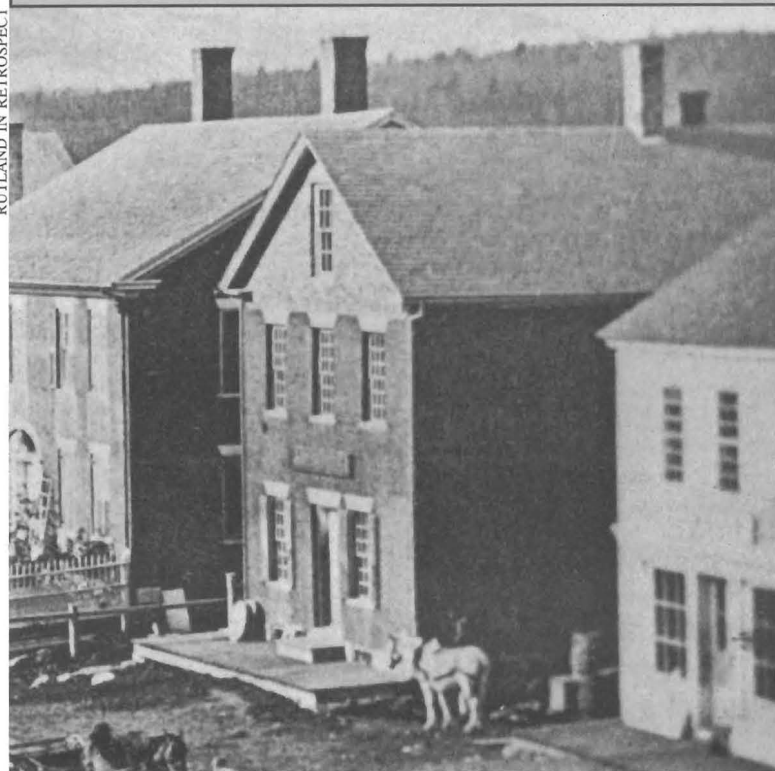
THURSDAY

FRIDAY

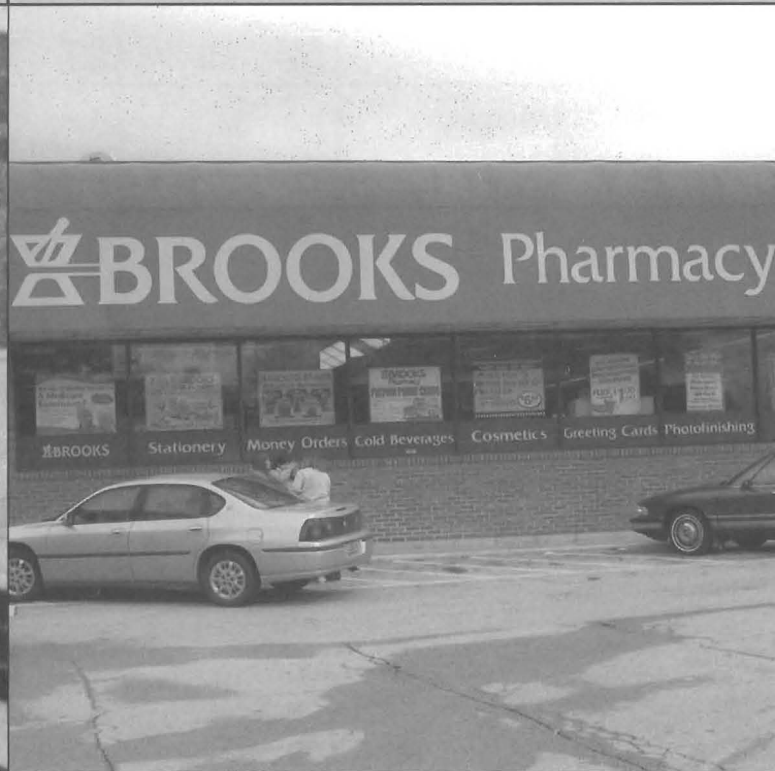
SATURDAY

						1
2 Daylight Savings Begins	3	4	5	6	7	8
9 Palm Sunday	10	11	12	13 Passover	14 Good Friday	15
16 Easter	17	18	19	20	21	22
23 24	25	26	27	28	29	30

THEN



NOW

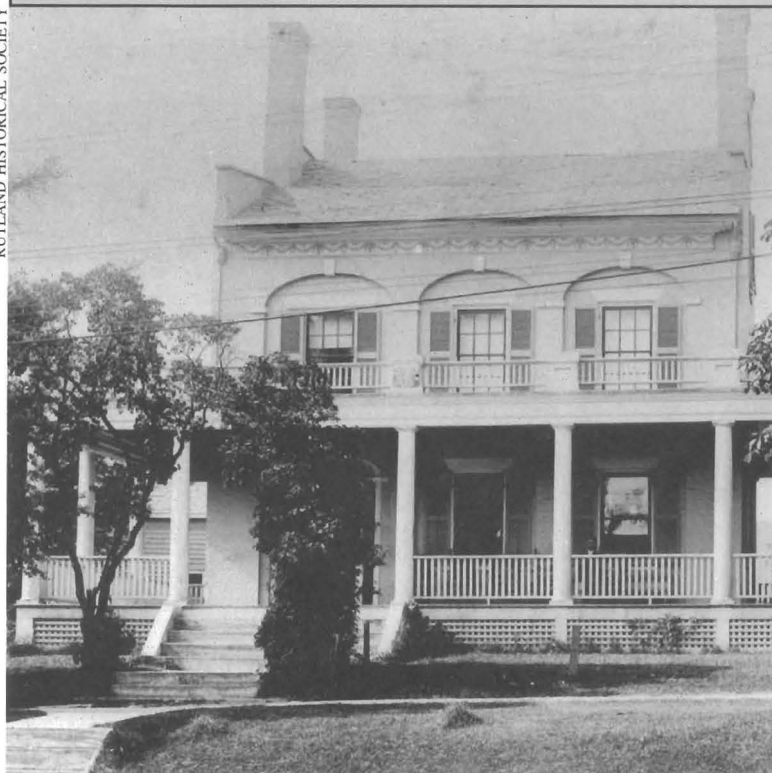


In 1817 a 2 1/2-story brick house was built on West Street across from Main Street Park for Dr. James Porter who operated a store there. Today the Brooks Pharmacy sits on the site.

MAY 2006

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14 Mother's Day	15	16	17	18	19	20 Armed Forces Day
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29 Memorial Day	30	31			

THEN



NOW



The four-chimneyed brick house on Route 4 in Center Rutland was built in 1825 for Thomas Page. Later it became "The Center," the homestead of the illustrious Rutland Ripleys. Later still it became the Center Rutland Athletic Club. Today it is again a private residence.

JUNE 2006

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
			Flag Day			
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Father's Day						
25	26	27	28	29	30	

THEN



NOW



Looking stark and forlorn, the new United States Court House sat atop Rutland's Center Street hill in 1860, two years after its completion. Today, warmly landscaped and with two additions, the Ammi Young-designed building houses the Rutland Free Library.

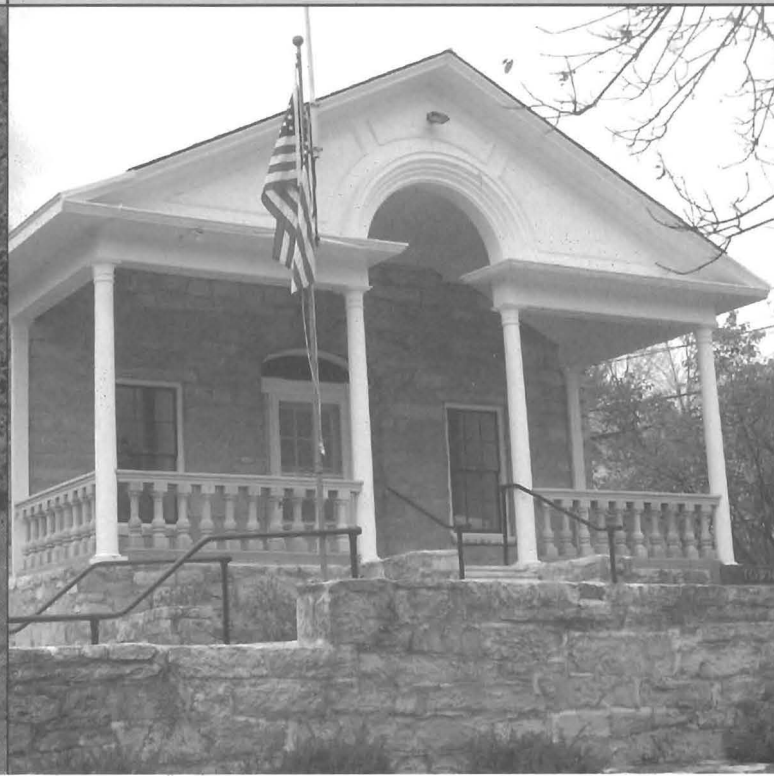
JULY 2006

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
		Independence Day				
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

THEN



NOW



This charming little building in Proctor began life in 1836 as a schoolhouse. Later it served as the town library. Following World War I it was converted to the Memorial Municipal Building or town office, a function it continues to serve today.

AUGUST 2006

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16 Battle of Bennington Day	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

THEN



NOW

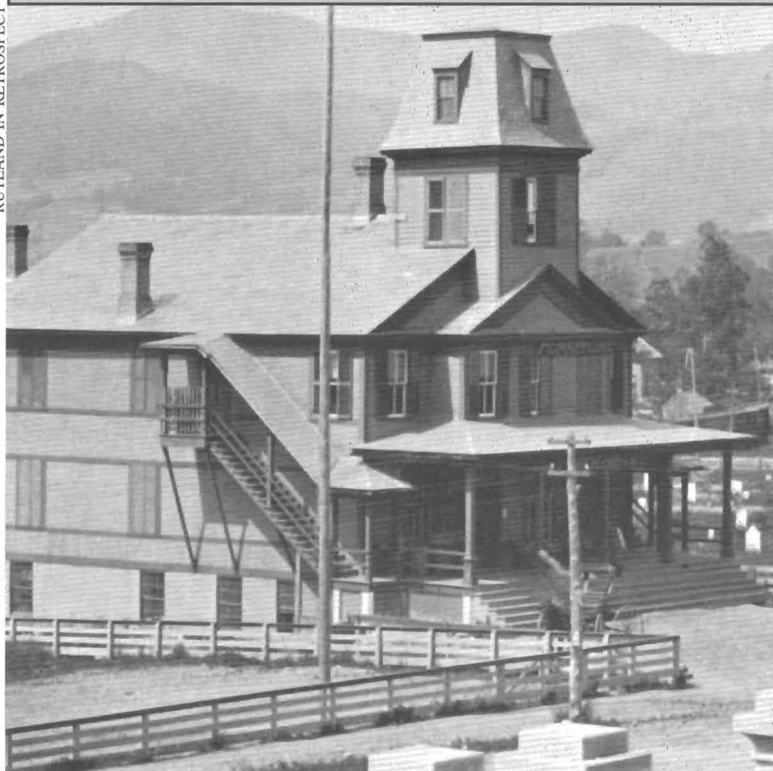


The Baptist Church, a substantial square brick structure, occupied the northeast corner of South Main and East Washington Streets from 1827 to 1872. Bricks from the razed building were later used to construct two Second Empire homes that stand there today.

SEPTEMBER 2006

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3	4 Labor Day	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30 Rosh Hashanah

THEN



NOW



A church once stood on the site of the present Rutland Town Offices. Following a fire in 1907, a school was erected on the site. In 1967, with the completion of the Rutland Town Elementary School on Post Road, the school was converted to the town offices.

OCTOBER 2006

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2 Yom Kippur	3	4	5	6	7
8	9 Columbus Day	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29 Daylight Savings Ends	30	31 Halloween				

THEN



NOW



The F.A. Morse store began operating in 1867 at the corner of Main and Marble Streets in West Rutland. Beginning in 1885 it became an important stop on the Rutland Street Railway. Later W. H. Humphreys and Victor Sevigny operated stores in the same building.

NOVEMBER 2006

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7 Election Day	8	9	10	11 Veteran's Day
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23 Thanksgiving Day	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

THEN

RUTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY



NOW

SHERMAN



Built originally in 1851, the Bardwell House achieved maximum grandeur in 1868 with the addition of a mansard roof. The first view is from Merchants Row. Today, viewed from the south and somewhat streamlined, it offers housing to seniors and the disabled.

DECEMBER 2006

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
						Hanukkah
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
24 New Year's Eve 31	Christmas Day					



The Art Deco Service Building (1930) was Vermont's first "skyscraper."